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FY15 Q2
Quarterly Report Jan-Mar 2015

Stabilizing Vulnerable Communities in the Central African Republic through
the Promotion of Intercommunity Dialogue and Economic Cooperation (SVC)

April 30, 2015



Muslim and Christian elders with their signed copy of Pact of Reconciliation and
Peace at Fatima church, in Bouar

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A. Executive Summary

Within a continued context of political instability in the Central African Republic, Mercy Corps is implementing the “Supporting Vulnerable Communities through the Promotion of Intercommunity Dialogue and Economic Cooperation (SVC) program whose goal is:

“to address the accelerating violence in CAR by providing mechanisms for peaceful resolution of inter-community conflicts together with longer-term activities to rebuild trust and cooperation between affected communities.”

During this reporting period Mercy Corps advanced on all three of its program objectives. In terms of the **first objective** of enhancing community leaders’ capacity to resolve inter-community disputes, Mercy Corps has:

- Trained local NGO members and UN agency beneficiaries (UNICEF, WHO), in social cohesion and peace.

Under the **second objective** of enabling Muslim and Christian communities to better work together, the project continued to support joint economic and social initiatives that benefit both Christian and Muslim communities. Mercy Corps has:

- Trained all 89 civil society organizations receiving small grants on financial management;
- Trained 90 youth on life skills, including 30 college students;
- Reviewed 12 youth projects and submitted these to USAID for concurrence of the AOR;
- Completed environmental review of 16 remaining socio-economic projects and 12 youth projects;
- Signed the last 22 subgrant agreements (of 89) with subgrantees;
- Transferred first funding tranche to 89 grantees, monitored these projects, and transferred a second tranche to 30 of these CSOs;
- Received, reviewed and approved technical and financial reports from 48 grantees;
- Supported 54 organizations in opening bank accounts; and,
- Conducted and finalized 12 (of 12) conflict actors mapping exercises in Bangui and Bouar.

Mercy Corps has also made significant progress in meeting its **third objective** of influencing public attitudes towards tolerance and non-violence. During this reporting period Mercy Corps has:

- Conducted biweekly meetings with Peace Committees (PCs) and Community Leaders (CL) to monitor conflict resolution and interfaith dialogues in their communities;
- Signed a contract with the Network of Journalists for Human Rights, trained 10 journalists to collect peace messages and success stories, and broadcast them via five radio stations;
- Conducted two intercommunity dialogues - one in Bangui and one in Bouar – with over 200 attendees;
- Produced 200 t-shirts, cap and banners with peace messages to educate community members;
- Organized two radio talk shows in Bouar;
- Renewed contracts for all 200 Peer Educators (PEs) including 100 women;
- Supported the 200 Peer Educators in organizing 11,800 awareness sessions; and,
- Participated in the social cohesion working group to avoid duplication of activities and enhance coordination.

Contextual Update

Within the framework of the Brazzaville Accords, ministers were sent to each Prefecture along with a team of facilitators to consult the local population ahead of the Bangui Forum. Beginning on January 26th, several kidnapping of these government representatives occurred in an attempt to disrupt the consultation process, but they were all released soon after. Likewise, after the actions of the international forces against Ex-Seleka groups in Bria and Bambari who were impeding the process, local consultations took place in these prefectures.

Under pressure of the international community, the protagonists of the Nairobi Agreement, the former presidents Francois Bozizé and Michel Djotodjia, renounced the agreement and proposed to join the Bangui Forum process. The agreement was perceived by the international community as an attempt at a power share by two actors responsible for the conflict in CAR, and hence largely discredited.

On February 28th, a meeting brought together Muslim and Christian former FACA (CAR army) members under the aegis of President Catherine Samba Panza, as a prelude to the military restructuring process. March has seen a reduction of the international forces: EUFOR force (700 troops) has ended its mission in Bangui airport, and the 3rd and 5th arrondissements. It was replaced by MINUSCA troops. French forces were reduced from 2,000 to 1,700. National security forces (police and gendarmerie) were progressively deployed in Bangui.

The transitional government, together with international forces, carried out several actions in favor of the restoration of security including the reopening of the police station in the 3rd arrondissement. The arrest by the MINUSCA of Andjilo an Anti Balaka commander who led the kidnapping of a French humanitarian, a Central African priest and a staff of MINUSCA. Ousmane Mahamat Ousmane, the leader of the PRGF and the former minister of Seleka president, Djotdjia, was also arrested. Arrest warrant were equally issued against several leaders of the Anti Balaka. Finally, the Seleka forces that occupied several administrative areas in the North (Bria and Bambari) were ousted by French forces and state control was reestablished.

Security

Bangui

- Following the arrest of the Anti-Balaka General, Andjilo by the MINUSCA in Bouca, unrest erupted in some neighborhoods in Bangui. On January 19th, a group of Anti-Balaka kidnapped a French humanitarian and a Central African priest to obtain the liberation of their leader. After 4 days, negotiations led by the Catholic archbishop obtained the release of the hostages. On January 20th, a civil expatriate staff of the MINUSCA was abducted by another armed group on the road to the airport but was released the same day.
- In March, several demonstrations blocked the city center; merchants from the city center market, primary school teachers, students, and women for peace. Judges were on strike throughout the period.
- On March 4th, in Begoua, an NGO team conducting an awareness-raising campaign on social cohesion between Peuhls and other ethnic groups was attacked by an Anti-Balaka group who threw hand grenades in front of their vehicle, damaging it, and later stole their equipment. Five civilians were wounded and the vehicle was heavily damaged. The NGO team was unharmed. All Mercy Corps activities were suspended in Begoua.
- On March 9th, in the 8th arrondissement, an Anti-Balaka group attempted to hold up a minibus carrying an NGO team. Youth from the neighborhood intervened and warded off the attackers.
- On March 10th, Ex-Seleka (FPRC) leader Ousmane Mahmat Ousmane was arrested and detained.

Bouar

- The release of Abdoulaye Miskine at the end of 2014 led to a decrease in kidnappings by his group, the FDPC.
- In January, the central mosque was searched for arms by the Anti Balaka at the procurer's behest. No violence was noted, although state actors having recourse to armed militias is perceived as highly questionable.
- In February, the murder of a taxi-moto driver led to a strike by local taxi drivers, halting Mercy Corps activities.
- Also in February, the imam of the central mosque was attacked as well as several Muslim IDP returnees.
- A MINUSCA cargo truck was pillaged by local youth. The MINUSCA soldiers originally wanted to search houses in the area, however, following a meeting with local youth leaders certain goods were returned.

B. Performance Summary

USAID and US Embassy field visit: On March 26th, Christophe Tocco, Deputy Regional Director of USAID, Bill Hagelman, USAID CAR Desk Officer, and Sara Devlin, Deputy Director for Africa Regional Service at US Embassy in Paris visited Mercy Corps SVC beneficiaries in Bimbo. A discussion was held with community leaders, Peace Committee members and micro-project holders on their work with Mercy Corps. During the discussion, USAID received feedback from beneficiaries and learned about the program's benefits and challenges, its impact on peace and social cohesion, and beneficiaries' thoughts on the future of CAR.

Objective 1: Muslim and Christian community leaders have enhanced capacity to resolve inter-communal disputes peacefully.

Activity 1.1: Prepare training materials for negotiation and dispute resolution workshops: IBN training curriculum, as well as the PowerPoint presentation for Community Leaders and PCs was completed during the last reporting period.

Activity 1.2: Select workshop participants: Participants selected during past reporting periods.

Activity 1.3: Train community leaders in dispute resolution and multi-stakeholder dialogue processes: from February 11th to 13th, Mercy Corps trained community leaders, civil servants and local authorities organized by UNICEF, WHO, and the Lutheran World Federation. 75 participants, including 43 women, attended the training. It focused on building and strengthening relationships, the major foundations of social cohesion (socio-cultural, economic, and political) and tolerance.

At the request of the national NGO "Action for Well-being", 49 members of the organization were trained by Mercy Corps on social cohesion in the youth center of the 5th arrondissement. The Mayor, the Police Commissioner of the 5th Arrondissement, and 2 neighborhood community leaders were also present. The subjects were the following:

- What is social cohesion?
- Why is social cohesion important for society?
- The role of youth during and after conflicts to promote social cohesion.
- What behaviors should youth have for sustainable social cohesion?

Those trained will be focal points to sensitize their organization members as well as to organize community awareness raising sessions. These local NGOs submit an activity report to Mercy Corps attest to the replication of the trainings.

Activity 1.4: Form Inter-Community Peace Committees (responsible for managing disputes in their areas): To date, 28 Peace Committees were established in program areas including 24 Peace Committees and 4 student Peace Committees.

Objective 2: Muslim-Christian Communities are better able to work together.

Activity 2.1: Organize community forums to solicit joint inter-community economic and social projects: In Bangui and Bouar, PCs and community leaders, accompanied by Mercy Corps staff, held a total of 32 interfaith forums attended by both Muslim and Christian groups to discuss mutually beneficial socio-economic micro projects. 1,250 people, including 564 women, participated in these forums. After detailing project selection criteria, discussion focused on ways Muslims and Christians could work together to submit joint micro project proposals that will mutually benefit both communities.

Activity 2.2: Identify and assess social and economic projects: Mercy Corps finalized the Environmental Review Form (ERF) after USAID feedback. The finalized ERF included 16 categories of projects which have been cleared by the USAID Environmental Officer (*See Appendix N°1: Mercy Corps ERF.*) Mercy Corps signed contracts with 22 micro project organizations including two in Bangui and 20 in Bouar. This activity mobilized 185 people (100 women) including project holders, local authorities and civil society organization representatives. All 89 project contracts have been signed. To reinforce organizational management, Mercy Corps supported 54 associations in opening bank accounts, as this was one prerequisite to access funding. In Bouar, organizations received their funding through an official ceremony presided over by the prefect. This ceremony mobilized more than 100 people including 50 women. (*See appendix N°2: First funding disbursement plan*)

At the time of writing, Mercy Corps monitored the implementation of 79 of the 89 organizations' micro-projects. The monitoring involved 235 members of these organizations, of whom 156 were women. These monitoring sessions served to gauge the quality of micro-projects in terms of compliance with provisional budgets and USAID environmental norms, as well as to discuss challenges and support needed from Mercy Corps, such as the challenge in building group dynamics or the support in technical advice on social cohesion.

Micro project launching: SVC Project
Manager participated in the launching of the *Association pour la Promotion des Couturieres et Couturiers de Centrafrique (APCCA)* tailor store. The store also serves as a sewing training center and has trained 50 women and young girls on sewing by providing them with sewing materials to create their own sewing activities. 50 people were present during the activity, including the Mayor of the 4th arrondissement, a representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs, community leaders, and the local community.



APCCA members

Art exhibition on social cohesion and Peace:

The association “*Groupe des Artistes Peinture de Centrafrique (GAPC)*”, was funded by Mercy Corps for the project “Creation and exhibition of art and painting on social cohesion and peace between communities”. GAPC organized an exhibition at the EUFOR military base in Bangui. Several paintings and art objects on social cohesion and peace were exposed to the public.

Launching of homemade soap association in 5th arrondissement:

Mercy Corps participated in the launching ceremony of an association making homemade soap. The *Association Femmes Moumines de Yassara Banda in the 5th Arrondissement* is made up of Muslim and Christian women. During ceremony, the association presented the soap and staged several plays pertaining to education and the child protection services they are involved in. The President of the Association thanked Mercy Corps and USAID for unifying them through the socioeconomic project.



Women's group involved in manufacture of artisanal soap

Following microproject monitoring sessions, 48 organizations submitted their technical and financial reports and were validated by Mercy Corps. Among those validated projects, Mercy Corps transferred the second and final funding installment to 30. The other 18 organization's reports are still being examined. (See appendix: N° 3; Second funding disbursement plan).

Activity 2.3: Identify and mobilize community members with financial, technical, vocational or business skills training to support economic and social projects: Mercy Corps trained 102 organizations' secretaries, treasurers, presidents or coordinators (including 63 women) of the selected microproject groups. The members were trained over a three-day period on the necessary financial and business skills for the management of their projects, including but not limited, to reporting expenses through a general ledger, technical report writing, activity planning, and managing a bank account. In Bangui, Mercy Corps is also supporting these organizations' members by organizing technical and vocational training opportunities (traineeships) with other skilled community members. Many microproject are involved in small businesses, mechanics businesses, tailoring, welding, and soap making.

For example, Mercy Corps contracted a tailor who trained 50 members of the *Réseau Nationale de la Jeunesse pour la Sauvegarde du Patrimoine Culturelle Immatérielle en RCA* (RNJSPI-RCA). After the training, the RNJSPI-CAR started their activity. In Bouar, Mercy Corps is currently negotiating with the government livestock extension service to train 20 members of socioeconomic group on livestock.

Objective 3: Public attitudes towards tolerance and non-violence are positively changed.

Activity 3.1: Peace Committees organize community dialogues on peacebuilding and intercommunity relations:



Awareness raising session Bouar

Community Awareness raising sessions by Peer Educators: the 200 PEs in Bangui and Bouar organized 11,800 awareness sessions (door-to-door or mass awareness raising sessions) with the aim to alter beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors as a basis for preventing violence and reinforcing community cohesion. The sessions reached 62,626 people, including 32,563 women. The sessions focused on: social cohesion, fostering peaceful relationships, good governance, human rights, the fight against corruption, democracy, minority rights, freedom of movement, right to physical integrity, CAR citizenship, all of which are modules in the Peer Educators *Community*

Awareness Raising Guide. During February, Bouar PEs focused on freedom of movement and access to public spaces so as to reduce violence against the local Muslim community. In the weeks surrounding International Women's Day (March 8th), all 200 PEs focused their sensitization campaign on women rights in general and specifically their rights during and after conflict with the aim to reduce stigma and reinforce respect of their rights.

PEs also began awareness-raising sessions in schools. An estimated 1,400 pupils at *Lycée Fatima*, *Lycée Miskine*, and *Lycée Boganda* in Bangui and *Lycée Modern of Bouar* were sensitized on social cohesion, the acceptance of other pupils return to school, peace and tolerance. Following awareness-raising sessions, each of the school authorities wrote an official letter to request that Mercy Corps train their teachers on the modules in the *Peer Educator Community Awareness Raising Guide*. To date, 36 teachers from Lycée Miskine were trained on the contents of the guide—such as social cohesion, governance, conflict, tolerance etc.—with the aim to enable them to train and sensitize their respective students. At the end of training, Mercy Corps and teachers developed a work plan to train other schools. The remaining three school teachers (two in Bangui and one in Bouar) will be trained in the upcoming period.

Table N°1: Community members' participation in awareness sessions organized by PEs.

Month	Number of sessions	Men	Women	Total
January	4 000	14 628	16 831	31 459
February	3 900	10 040	9 084	19 124
March	3 900	5 395	6 648	12 043
Total	11 800	30 063	32 563	62 626

Community members, school authorities, civil society organizations and youth continued to welcome awareness-raising sessions and spoke of the benefit of social cohesion. For example: Christian Feindono, Anti Balaka leaders in Bangui said, "*We did not understand that it is ourselves that were doing wrong. In fact we are all CAR citizens. Today we will leave our weapons behind.*"

Youth awareness raising campaign on social cohesion and peace through African Cup of Nations:

The local NGO the “Central African Brothers”, who work with Muslim and Christian communities on reconciliation and peace, carried out awareness-raising campaigns on social cohesion during the African Cup of Nations at Marabena Stadium in the 5th arrondissement. This activity, “Cohesion-CAN 2015”, was attended by 700 youths over 10 days including 150 youth girls from 3rd, 5th, 8th, and 4th arrondissement of Bangui. Participants were educated on social cohesion, peace and reconciliation through theater plays, a conference and debate. Activities also included a quiz on social cohesion, tolerance, peace, and respect for human rights. Youth who gave correct responses received gifts such as T-shirts with peace messages and school supplies. This event was an opportunity for youth to watch African Cup of Nations while affirming the benefits of tolerance and social cohesion among youth. This activity was also a great moment for 150 youth from divided communities (75 from Muslim community and 75 other from Christian community) to meet since the startup of conflict in December 2013. All youth presented committed themselves to support peace initiative within their community.

Conflict Actors mapping: Mercy Corps completed six community actors mapping exercises in each project location. This activity mobilized 469 participants including 139 women. During this activity, community members identified all actors and their relationships in the current conflict. This activity was helpful in identifying potential allies and opportunities to intervene.

Community dialogue preparation:

Following the conflict actor mapping in Bangui and in Bouar, Mercy Corps, in collaboration with community leaders and PCs, organized one meeting in each of the 12 program locations with 100 participants (32 women) including community leaders, local authorities, traders, civil society representatives, youth and women organizations leaders, Youth Council prefectural representatives, women leaders, and religious leaders. Meetings focused on the organization of a future community dialogue. Mercy Corps and participants identified key stakeholders, the themes of each dialogue, methodology, when and where to hold it as well as how to ensure security of all participants etc.



Muslim and Christian Leaders with French Ambassador

Bangui dialogue between Muslim and Christian community from 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th



Priest and Imam who asked forgiveness from each other

arrondissements: A group composed of 20 leaders including 10 from Muslim community and 10 from Christian communities met several times with PC support to discuss their opinions, with focus on freedom of movement, recovery of economic activities, and interaction between Muslim and Christian communities in their respective areas. This dialogue was a conjoint initiative supported by Mercy Corps and IOM (International Organization of Migration) through Peace Committees and the local NGO “Les frères Centrafricains-

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Ambassadeurs de la Paix“. After five days’ discussion, the two communities agreed to discontinue stigmatizing each other, to let Muslim community merchants restart trading, to allow community members to return to their community, and share security information, the group also decided to organize a reconciliation celebration in the 2nd arrondissement.

Reconciliation celebration ceremony: This event mobilized around 256 members including 98 Muslim and Christian women from the 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th arrondissements. During this event, Muslim and Christian leaders called for peace and reconciliation as well as for forgiveness between the two communities. It was a moment for many citizens from both communities to meet since the conflict started in December 2013. The president of the Muslim community and the landowner exchanged symbols for peace and all of them demanded that their respective communities protect their citizens and guarantee freedom of movement. Several dances were staged with Muslim and Christian communities.

Community Dialogue in Bouar: Mercy Corps and 6 PCs and community leaders, in collaboration with the religious platform, held a 3 day intercommunity dialogue entitled "Day of intercommunity reflection and dialogue on peace and social cohesion in Bouar." This activity mobilized over 200 participants from Bouar Centre, the sub-prefectures of Baoro and Baboua, Cantonnier, Yem and Yelewa. Participants were local authorities (Prefect of Bouar, sub-prefect of Baoro and Baboua), priests and imams, elders, leaders and youth leaders of 26 ethnic groups in Bouar, and the civil society. During the three days, discussions focused on three themes: 1) Freedom of movement of persons and property, 2) Access to public services such as schools, health center by Muslim community and minorities etc.3), and access to public places such as markets, bus stations, etc., the possibility for Muslim community to restart and continue their economic activities in Bouar and its surrounding villages etc.

Mercy Corps signed a contract with Radio Siriri, which covers Bouar and surrounding villages, to cover all the dialogue activities live. This gave opportunity to all community members to hear what was being discussed and to know the results of the dialogue.

Signature of a pact of reconciliation and peace between ethnic groups in Bouar: After three days’ discussion, leaders of 26 ethnic groups—6 from Muslim community and 20 from Christian communities—in Bouar wrote a pact of reconciliation and peace between them (*See appendix N°4; Signed copy of Pact of Reconciliation and Peace*). At the end of the dialogue, a signing ceremony was organized with the presence of all ethnic’s group elders, their youth leaders and the community at large. Before signing the pact, a designated imam from Muslim community and a priest from Christian community asked for forgiveness in the name of their respective community by pronouncing the following sentences:

“On behalf of the X community in Bouar, we apologize, we ask forgiveness for everything that happened during the conflict. I drink this water as a symbol of our reconciliation in peace. May Allah/Jesus Christ guide us to the path of peace and forgiveness, Amen!”



Gbaya ethnic leader signing pact

During the dialogue three commissions were established to find solutions to the three issues of freedom of movement, access to essential services, and access to public places. Each commission presented to the group their work which included for each topic, solution, action, actors and

recommendation to each community, local authorities, government of CAR, and INGO. Of these dialogues, Priest Ferdinand Bassala, member of the Bouar religious platform said, “*We no longer need to go to Bangui forum, we have had our dialogues.*”

Following the signing of the pact, an intercommunity committee was put in place composed of four leaders to coordinate activities between communities. Likewise, 26 young leaders of each ethnic group expressed their commitment to the declaration of traditional leaders. Four commissions were also put in place to monitor dialogue results, one in Bouar, one in Baoro, one in Baboua and the prefectural coordination. These commissions will coordinate with leaders, PCs and Mercy Corps, the implementation of dialogue solutions, actions and recommendations.

Monitoring of the decisions of the past intercommunity dialogue: Following the Bouar dialogue, Mercy Corps, community leaders, and PCs organized meeting with the prefectural committee to monitor the decisions taken during past dialogues.

Decision	Implementation
Allow young Muslim to restart their moto-taxi activity in Bouar	Three of young Muslims who were forbidden to start their work as moto-taxi drivers because of their religion, started their activity.
Allow Muslim community members to restart their economic activities	Two Muslims merchants started businesses in Bouar city center.
Remove illegal barriers/roadblocks in Bouar and its surrounding villages	Two Muslim women who were not able to go to Beninga weekly market 10 km from Bouar have started going to that market without any problem. Four illegal roadblocks that had been set up by Anti-balaka groups in Yem Yelewa were taken down.
Establish a police unit to ensure citizens security at the bus station in Bouar city center	A police patrol is parked at the bus station at rush hours to ensure the safety and security of people and property.
Support and facilitate the reintegration and acceptance of displaced community members to their communities in Bouar and its surrounding villages	Leaders, local authorities and PCs facilitated the reintegration and acceptance of a group of 30 households who returned to the village of Kela Dougou. This Mbororo ethnic group is comprised of approximately 200 people.

Youth social cohesion club training: For three days in January, Mercy Corps trained 40 youths (including 20 young women representatives) of 20 youth organizations in Bouar. Training sessions focused on life skills, youth employment, good governance, human rights, youth mobilization, peace, tolerance, CAR citizenship as well as youth awareness-raising techniques and tools etc. This training cycle was an opportunity for youth to improve their understanding of their role in promoting peace in their community and their ability to prevent conflict. It was also an opportune moment to reinforce collaboration between youth from divided communities.

Youth social cohesion club awareness raising: Following the training, each group of youth leaders organized restitution sessions to educate their peers within their organizations. This activity mobilized around 453 youth organization members, including 245 young girls and focused on the entire module developed during youth training. Of note, in Baboua, the youth club organized an awareness-raising session on social cohesion and peace at Lutheran Evangelic Church of Abba. This activity mobilized 861 community members, including 462 women of Lutheran church congregation from 11 arrondissements, 163 men and 236 children.

Youth social projects: Following the training, Mercy Corps organized an orientation session for 77 youth leaders (including 24 women) of youth social cohesion clubs. This orientation session outlined activities eligible for funding and the project selection criteria:

- Projects must be pertinent for social cohesion.
- Project holders must have previous experience in their project.

- The length of the funded project must not exceed 4 months.
- The project must have a sustainability plan.
- The budget must be coherent and realistic.
- The project must respect environmental norms etc.

Youth social activities funding: Mercy Corps received 12 youth awareness-raising funding requests from six youth social cohesion clubs' in both Bangui and Bouar. They consist of football matches, shopping in peace marches, marathon for peace, panel discussions, interactive theater, Christian-Muslim dialogue etc. Mercy Corps reviewed and validated all the projects and signed contracts with projects holders.

Activity 3.2: Peace Committees work to resolve disputes in their communities: Mercy Corps staff organized six meetings with 144 Peace Committee members in Bouar and Bangui. Meetings were an opportunity for PC to report on conflicts negotiated, to share new identified conflicts to be negotiated and to discuss challenges and lessons learned around negotiated conflicts. Due to the diversity of conflicts, Mercy Corps regularly provided support to improve leader's capacity to negotiate conflicts.

Therefore, IC-PC in Bouar and Bangui, with the support of Mercy Corps staff, worked with community members to resolve 55 conflicts including: a) 23 intercommunity, social and interfamilial conflicts (religion, ethnic group etc.), b) 21 conflicts among family members and c) 11 between individuals. It should be mentioned that this categorization is fluid because all family conflicts negotiated by PC and leader have religion related root causes. For example, in 3rd arrondissement, a dispute between an inter-faith married couple nearly led to a larger conflict between the respective families, but the PC was able to bring the couple and their families together to negotiate. The ability of PC to predict and rapidly respond to conflicts has therefore reduced tension between communities. To date, monitoring of conflicts resolved by PC shows that all parties have respected conflict negotiation agreement.

Activity 3.3: Conduct weekly media outreach through peace messages: The registration of 10 new peace messages recorded both in French and Sango was received from a local artist. These peace messages will be broadcasted during next reporting period.

Partnership with Journalist Network for Human Rights (RJDH) to collect and broadcast micro project holders and community testimonies on social cohesion and peace: Mercy Corps signed a contract with the RJDH to collect and broadcast socioeconomic projects holders and community at large testimonies on social cohesion and peace as well as community leaders' message for peace. Twelve selected journalists and radio technicians from *Radio Siriri*, and *Radio Maïgaro* in Bouar; *Radio Notre Dame*, *Radio Esca*, and *Radio Voix de la Paix* in Bangui were trained by both Mercy Corps and the RJDH coordination.

Training focused on:

- SVC program objectives and theory of changes,
- Social cohesion and its three pillars (sociocultural, economic and governance),
- How to gauge social cohesion within community,
- How to peacefully live together with others, and,
- The link between socio economic project and social cohesion.

Training also included understanding of journalist roles during crisis, how to protect sources, some advices on "Do No Harm approach", how to collect and broadcast testimonies, roles and responsibility of Mercy Corps, RJDH, and Journalists. At the end of training, RJDH developed a work plan including the collection, analysis and broadcasting of testimonies and peace messages. RJDH will broadcast 100 testimonies on social cohesion and peace on the previously mentioned partner radio stations. During this period, 10 testimonies (success stories) were collected from project holders and communities at large in Bouar and Bangui. Selected messages were submitted and

reviewed by Mercy Corps and are currently being broadcasted by Radio Notre Dame, Radio ICDI, Radio NEIMI in Bangui. These messages were also posted on RJDH website.

Radio talk show: In Bouar, two radio talks show were held on Radio Siriri to promote the return and acceptance of returnees in their communities and promote an attitude of tolerance and social cohesion between communities. This activity was initiated to facilitate the reintegration and acceptance of community members to their community but was specifically focused on the acceptance of a group of 30 households who returned to the village of Kela Dougou. This Mbororo ethnic group is comprised of approximately 200 people. During the talk show, the Anti Balaka leader in Nana Mambéré, Muslim and Christian leaders, as well as representative of the state and civil society leaders invited all communities to accept and respect returnees and protect them.

Peace Messages on T-shirt and caps for the dialogue: During the reporting period, 150 T-shirts and 150 caps were printed for each Bouar dialogue participant. All clothing articles contained the Mercy Corps and USAID logos. The three following peace messages were printed on T-shirts:

- All together under the Baobab tree for dialogue on peace.
- We are all Central African, we have right to: security, physical integrity, and freedom of movement.
- In Bouar and everywhere in CAR, Central Africans united beyond our origin and religion.

C. Monitoring & Evaluation

The M&E team as conducted several field visits to monitor program activities. Mercy Corps is finalizing two tools, one to measure social cohesion among project holders and an endline survey tool. Also during the reporting period, Mercy Corps finalized the scope of work for an external consultant to evaluate the SVC program, and the recruitment for that consultant is under way.

D. Coordination

Meeting with the Working Group on Social Cohesion: During this quarter, the working group welcomed organizations such as Cordaid and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Several meetings were held to reinforce collaboration between group members. The working group also developed a template with the aim to map each organizations peace committee and talk of PCs next activities. The group is reinforcing its collaboration through the Ministry of Reconciliation. SFCG and Mercy Corps will also work together to organize a national PC lesson learned initiative. During this period, Mercy Corps and CRS implemented several activities together in Bouar.

E. Conclusion and Upcoming Activities

Despite the difficult security environment, Mercy Corps made significant progress toward program objectives. Mercy Corps supported PCs and leaders to conduct dialogue in Bangui and Bouar, reinforced micro project holders management capacity, supported all the 200 Peer Educators in organizing community awareness raising sessions, trained youth social cohesion club members, signed contracts with 22 socioeconomic projects holders, transferred funding to ongoing socioeconomic projects, supported PC and community leaders to carry out Interest Based Negotiation in Bouar and Bangui, and continued radio peace messages.

During the upcoming reporting period Mercy Corps will:

- Support journalists in collecting and disseminating community testimony on program activities, peace and social cohesion.
- Support IC-PC members to resolve disputes.

- Support and monitor peer educator's community awareness raising sessions.
- Sign contracts with new socioeconomic project holder and release funds
- Support Peer Educator awareness raising events to enhance of social cohesion efforts.
- Fund and support youth social cohesion awareness raising session in Bangui and Bouar.
- Finalize the recruitment of an external consultant for final evaluation and conduct evaluation.
- Continue to participate in coordination meetings with other INGOs and UN agencies.
- Support leaders and IC-PCs to organize inter-community dialogues in Bangui and Bouar.
- Finalize new training curriculum and train selected groups in managing socioeconomic projects.

Activity Plan for upcoming quarter (FY15 Q6)

Planned Activities	Responsible Parties	April	May	June
Activity 1.3: Train community leaders in dispute resolution and multi-stakeholder dialogue processes	Mercy Corps, Peace Committee members	x	x	
Activity 2.2: Identify and assess social and economic projects for Youth	Mercy Corps, peer educators, and community leaders	x	x	x
Activity 2.3: Identify and mobilize community members with financial, technical, vocational or business skills training to support economic and social projects	Mercy Corps	x	x	x
Activity 3.1: Peace Committees organize community dialogues on peacebuilding and intercommunity relations.	Mercy Corps, peer educators, and community leaders	x	x	x
Activity 3.2: Peace Committees work to resolve disputes in their communities	Mercy Corps, Inter-community Peace committee and community leaders	x	x	x
Activity 3.3: Conduct weekly media outreach	Mercy Corps, peer educators, and community leaders	x	x	x

List of Appendixes

Appendix N°1: Mercy Corps ERF

Appendix N°2: Funding disbursement plan (first settlement)

Appendix: N°3: Funding disbursement plan second and final settlement

Appendix N°4: Signed copy of Pact of reconciliation and Peace